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ABSTRACT

Based on a sample of 12 school sites in California, the report documents the effectiveness of the secondary Resource Specialist Program (RSP) which provides instruction and services for handicapped students--primarily the learning disabled--who are assigned to a regular classroom for a majority of the school day. A number of program components are examined: entrance criteria and caseload characteristics, resource specialist's and aide's roles, staff services, budget, and classroom activities. Three different program types are profited--the Learning Skills Class (for elective credit remediation), Parallel Class (for graduation credit), and the Tutoring Center (designed to support the regular academic program). Sections also address student performance and progress, coordination issues (such as student scheduling and classroom activities), staff satisfaction, and student perception of their performance and of the resource specialist program. Noted among findings are: (1) that entrance to the RSP was determined by academic achievement, consistent measues of academic growth were not collected by most programs; (2) that two-thirds of the RSPs established a beneficial relationship with the counselor's office; (3) that most resource specialists, with the exception of those in the tutoring center, were satisfied with major aspects of the RSP; and (4) that student responses to the RSP were generally favorable. Recommendations are made regarding program emphasis, responsibility, eligibility, and monitoring. A copy of the program administrative questionnaire is included. (SW)

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STUDY OF SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

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Final Report

December 1, 1981

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California State Department of Education

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FORWARD

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study evaluates the effectiveness of the Resource Specialist Program's goals and program organization in the secondary schools by relating the program's method of service delivery and goals to teacher and student satisfaction, student progress, and coordination issues.

The Resource Specialist Program (RSP) provides instruction and services for handicapped students--primarily the learning disabled--who are assigned to a regular classroom for a majority of the school day. The Resource Specialist (RS) is responsible for instructing students, coordinating their special education services, monitoring their progress, consulting with their regular classroom teachers, and emphasizing academic achievement, vocational development, and preparation for adult life. We interviewed and observed staff and students at 12 secondary schools in seven districts in order to evaluate the program's functions and its effectiveness in meeting student needs.

We found that the broad program guidelines and eligibility requirements had permitted three general types of program organization to emerge: the Learning Skills Class, where RSs offered remedial courses for elective credit; the Parallel, Class where RSs conducted subject-area classes for graduation credit; and the Tutoring Center, where assisted students with regular academic assignments. Staff and student satisfaction with the first two program types was fairly high, while most Tutoring Center Resource Specialists were generally dissatisfied with their programs.

Four major issues emerged as a result of our site visits and data analysis: program emphasis, responsibility, eligibility, and monitoring.

Program Emphasis

Given the comparatively low level of academic performance of the RSP student population, it is questionable whether the RSP should continue to place such strong emphasis on academic skill development in the secondary grades. Surely many of the coping strategies and remedial classes either have proved useful or have been abandoned by the time the student reaches the secondary levels. Student social skills and vocational plans emerge as a primary need at the secondary level.

The Resource Specialist Program requirements--which stress functioning in the regular class--effectively preempt intensive development of a comprehensive vocational program. Federal law stresses the concept of integrating, to fullest extent possible, the special education student in the regular program. Accordingly, students must attempt to succeed on the regular program's terms. However, learning disabled students, for a variety of reasons, simply may not be best served by the regular program.

What seems lacking is an acknowledgment that the standard school program has proved only minimally effective for these students. These learning disabled students have not been historically excluded from the classroom, as have students with more extreme handicaps. The type of learning disabled student served by the RSP has usually been allowed to barely pass or to fail in the regular classroom setting.

Perhaps at the secondary level the Resource Specialist Program should provide minimum academic support and should concentrate more on providing vocational and counseling services. However, most of the Resource Specialists interviewed mentioned that they had not been trained in vocational education. Yet, many were doing an admirable job of developing a vocational component for their program. The RSP probably could be more effective in secondary schools if its sole purpose was to provide students with the social and vocational skills they will need for the adult world. While this approach could possibly displace some students now served by the RSP, a vocational and social emphasis could reach some of the currently

disenfranchised students who are leaving school without adequate academic or vocational training.

Program Responsibility

Although the Resource Specialist Program legitimately provides segregated special education services, it also provides services that undoubtedly are the responsibility of the regular education program.

To the extent that the RSP resources are used to enable students to benefit from the regular education program or to develop supplementary vocational and counseling programs, the RSP services appear appropriate. But we question whether some services are best provided by the RSP or by the regular education program. In particular, the use of Resource Specialists to maintain a study hall or to provide extensive homework assistance appears to be a costly service that does not need such highly trained professional staff. Furthermore, maintaining a study hall should be the school's responsibility, and a study hall could reduce the costly RSP service.

Students who need a regularly scheduled study period to augment their regular program should be placed in a study hall and should not be declared exceptional in order to attend.

Program Eligibility

Most Resource Specialist Programs operate with an unclear definition of the learning disabled student. Consequently, academic failure or a history of receiving services appear to be the major criteria for receiving services. More precisely, though, the real criterion seems to be whether or not the student can benefit from the Resource Specialist Program at an individual school. This criterion--being able to benefit from an existing program--runs counter to the 94-142 principle of appropriate placement: the student needs should determine the program rather than the reverse, with the program selecting the student.

The broad guidelines for the Resource Specialist Program permit widely varied types of programs in the secondary schools. These programs employ creative approaches to the numerous problems of service delivery in the secondary schools, and they appeared to accommodate the unique needs of the individual schools. But the latitude the RSP enjoys is so extensive that it allows the school site staff to determine the type of student the program will serve as well as the character of the program's services.

As a statewide program the RSP does not have an operational definition of its target population. Eligibility for the program varies across districts, and program services vary accordingly. The state assumes a considerable fiscal burden in permitting students with varied and often undefined performance problems to be labeled as exceptional students. Definitive leadership is required to determine eligibility criteria for the learning disabled population.

Program Monitoring

The paucity of data on student performance and progress undermines claims of professionalism in the RSP and impedes efforts to compare the RSP with other programs such as Vocational or Compensatory education. With few exceptions, Resource Specialists are not able to provide quantitative information on the success of their program or a particular teaching approach. Resource Specialists are required to collect student progress information, but apparently this requirement is not adequately monitored. Perhaps the state could develop a self-evaluation instrument for the Resource Specialist Program. This instrument could outine simple evaluation techniques that districts and Resource Specialists could use to monitor student progress.

INTRODUCTION

This study evaluates the effectiveness of the secondary Resource Specialist Program by initially clarifying the program's unique educational and social goals. This report describes the goals, program organization, and the resources available to three types of secondary Resource Specialist Programs operating under the Master Plan for Special Education. By relating the program's method of service delivery and goals to teacher and student satisfaction, student progress, and coordination issues, we evaluate the program's ability to meet student needs.

Program Overview

In 1974, the California State Legislature created a new special education service--the Resource Specialist Program--to provide instruction and services for handicapped students who are assigned to a regular classroom for a majority of the school day. The Resource Specialist Program, under the direction of the Resource Specialist, is responsible for a variety of tasks:

- Instructing RSP students.
- Coordinating special education services with regular school programs for RSP students.
- Monitoring student progress.
- Providing consulting, resource information, and materials for parents and regular school staff.
- Providing information for RSP students and their parents.
- Emphasizing, at the secondary school level, academic achievement, career and vocational development, and preparation for adult life.

The Resource Specialist Program's success at the elementary level was documented by SRI International in its Second Annual Report on the Independent Evaluation of the California Master Plan. However, parents and teachers of secondary students consistently reported greater dissatisfaction with secondary special education programs than their elementary counterparts. Parents of secondary students were less satisfied than elementary students' parents with the special education program and, in particular, were less satisfied with their child's academic achievement and the regular teacher's acceptance of their child. Similarly, regular secondary teachers were more likely than elementary teachers to report that special education students were inappropriately placed in their class and that procedures to integrate special education students were not effective. Secondary teachers were less likely to accommodate special education students by changing the classroom's physical arrangement, modifying curriculum or instructional groupings, or using aides or special materials. It appears that the program's effectiveness in the secondary schools has been hampered by many conditions that exist only at the secondary level. Although the RSP con- tributes greatly to services for students, many problems--student counseling and tutorial needs, subject-oriented teachers, and scheduling--have been cited as making the RSP difficult to implement in the secondary schools. This study explores these issues and identifies unique practices that appear successful in the secondary school environment.

METHOD OF STUDY

This study has four purposes: to describe the different ways the Resource Specialist has adapted the RSP instruction program and other services to the environment of individual secondary schools, to analyze the coordination of services with an eye toward their transferability to other districts, to assess student and staff satisfaction, and to measure student progress associated with the program.

To evaluate the major features of the secondary RSP, we needed information on a variety of program functions:

- How students receive instruction in the RSP.
- How the RSP is organized to deliver services.
- What are the program's goals.
- How the RS coordinates services for students.
- How the RS aids the regular school staff.
- How the RS monitors student progress.
- How the RSP emphasizes academic achievement, vocational development, and preparation for adult life.

Sample

We selected for study a large county that has operated under the Master Plan since 1974. The county administration did not specify how districts should operate the RSP. Therefore, each district has adapted its RSP to local needs. We obtained permission to visit the district RSPs and to observe and interview its staff and students. On the basis of student enrollment, number and type of categorical funds available at the school, and community demographics, 12 school sites from seven districts were

selected for study. Table 1 displays code namesfor schools (1-12) and districts (A-G), regular school enrollment, RSP full-time equivalents and caseload, and the percentage of students served by the RSP at each school.

Instrument Development

Four questionnaires for personal interviews of RSP staff and students were developed to collect descriptive and quantitative information about the program. A data collection form for student progress information was also developed. Refer to Appendix A for copies of the questionnaires.

Program Organization

We expected to find at least two kinds of program service: one that emphasized support of the regular school program and another that developed alternatives to that program. In order to classify the programs, we needed to ask Resource Specialists numerous questions about their program's components:

- Entrance criteria and caseload characteristics
- Resource Specialist and aide's roles
- Staff services
- Budget
- Classroom activities.

Program Goals

We wanted to identify program goals--improving academic skills or remediation, vocational preparation, or social skills--and to associate those goals with a particular type of program organization. Therefore, we asked Resource Specialists to describe their program's goals, curriculum emphasis, and measures of goal attainment.

Table 1

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

School	District	Total School Enrollment	RSP Caseload	% Served in RSP	Other Categorical Funds Available to School	FTE Resource Specialists
1	A	1,450	75	5.2	Voc. Ed.*	2.5
2	A	1,600	54	3.4	None	2.5
3	B	1,710	95	5.6	SIP, Voc. Ed.*	2.0
4	C	150	63	42.0	SIP,Voc. Ed.*	1.0
5	C	1,930	150	10.5	Voc. Ed.	3.0
6	D	540	68	12.6	Voc. Ed.*	1.0
7	E	1,215	114	9.4	SIP	2.0
8	F	720	42	5.8	SIP, Title I	1.5
9	C	1,050	62	5.9	Voc. Ed.	2.0
10	F	1,075	46	4.3	Title 1, Voc. Ed.*	1.75
11	G	1,500	28	1.9	Voc. Ed.	1.0
12	B	785	24	3.1	None	1.0

*Funds also available to Resource Specialist Program.

Staff Satisfaction

Resource Specialists and their aides were asked about their perception of student skills, attitude change, and regular classroom teacher willingness to adapt to RSP student needs.

Student Satisfaction

In a brief interview, we asked students questions about their perception of their skills and attitude change. We also asked them for descriptions of their classroom activities and their satisfaction with the RSP class.

Student Progress

In addition to assessing staff and student perception of student progress, we obtained objective measures of student progress. For the students we interviewed, all the assessment and achievement scores available for the past two years were gathered.

Data Collection

Information on RSP practices was collected from 12 secondary schools during two to three-day site visits to nine high schools and three junior high schools. Of the 23 Resource Specialists at the school sites, 20 were interviewed along with most of their aides. Eighteen percent of the Resource Specialists' students were sampled, and 15% were interviewed about their participation in the program. A total of 119 students agreed to participate; only one student declined to participate. Replacements for absent or delinquent students were usually found. Resource Specialists reviewed the list of proposed interviews and vetoed a few students who they believed to be emotionally unstable at the time and likely to be upset by such an

interview. Table 2 displays the number of Resource Specialists, aides, and students interviewed at each site.

Of the students interviewed, 37 (31.6%) were female and 80 (68.4%) were male. Nearly one-quarter of the students had a readily observable problem with vision, hearing, or comprehension. Eighty percent were white, 7% were black, 12% were Hispanic, and 1% were Asian.

Table 2

NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS

Site Number	Resource Specialists	RS Aides	Students
1	1	1	4
2	3	2	13
3	1	1	10
4	1	1	13
5	3	2	24
6*	2	0	0
7	1	1	1
8	2	1	15
9	2	1	7
10	1	1	4
11	1	0	6
12	1	0	6
13	1	1	16
Total	20	12	119

*Pretest site.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Although each site's program offered unique services, some programs shared similar characteristics in their goals for students, curricular emphasis, and general mode of service delivery. On the basis of these characteristics, the program could be classified into three different program types: the Learning Skills Class, the Parallel Class, and the Tutoring Center. This section contains a profile of each program's organization, goals, student scheduling pattern, and vocational education component. A description of the program's entrance criteria precedes the program profiles.

Entrance Criteria

Currently, admission to the Resource Specialist Program is based on measures of grade-equivalent academic performance. For the purpose of federal pupil counts, students are classified as learning disabled. Although criteria varied from site to site, RSPs usually required that students be two or more years below grade level in one or more skill areas. Only two sites specifically required evidence of a handicap, and most sites conducted task analysis tests rather than modality tests. Thus, many students at any school might be eligible for the program, but they would not be referred unless unable to function in the regular academic program. Accordingly, Resource Specialists commonly referred to goals such as preparing students for vocational experience, functioning in the regular classroom, and improving emotional well-being for these students. However, a student's status in these areas is difficult to quantify because few objective measures are appropriate for the first two goals, and Resource Specialists rarely included psychological tests in assessment plans. Generally, the entrance criteria for the program were consistent with only the academic portion of the program's services.

Program Profile: Learning Skills Class

Although many Resource Specialists operate what they refer to as a Learning Skills Class, it is often a tutoring or rapid intervention teaching center. In this report, the Learning Skills Class will specifically refer to a type of program observed at three schools, where Resource Specialists offered remedial courses for elective credit, stressing basic problem solving.

Program Organization

Learning Skills Classes at three separate RSPs were observed. Each Resource Specialist taught at least two or three Learning Skills Classes for the students on her caseload. The aides tutored whenever the classes were in session. Classes began with a group activity, to discuss either the day's classwork or personal issues. Students then individually worked on class assignments at their own pace. Assignments were usually designed to improve comprehension, spelling, decoding, or problem-solving skills. Students could either complete homework or play games when they finished regular assignments. At one site, the Learning Skills program kept students busy with Learning Skill assignments and encouraged them to return to the Learning Skills classroom at the end of the day for assistance with homework. At the other two sites, the programs seemed to permit more time for homework during the scheduled Learning Skills class period.

Aides were responsible for a variety of clerical duties, but their tutoring responsibilities were most important. One program assigned one aide to clerical tasks, leaving others to tutor. Other programs required the aides to do clerical work a few hours per day or one day per week.

Goals

The Learning Skills Class promoted three goals: developing problem-solving skills, enhancing self-concept, and preparing students for vocational experiences. Although improving academic skills and functioning in the regular academic program were related goals, they were not performance standards for remaining in the Learning Skills Class.

Student Scheduling

Of the students interviewed in the Learning Skills Class, 97% were in a special education class for one period per day and three percent were in the class for more than one period.

Vocational Education

Two programs included a prevocational component as a once-a-week activity. The other program was in a school that required a career education class for graduation, and students participated in job interest inventories in that class. Consequently, the Resource Specialist Program extended its vocational program with a career technician position filled by a former aide. The technician developed jobs for special education students by meeting with community employers.

Program Profile: Parallel Class

Resource Specialists who operated a Parallel Class program emphasized their consulting roles and worked closely with other special education staff members. Often Designated Instruction Service (DIS) or Individualized and Small Group Instruction (ISGI) teachers conducted subject-area classes for graduation credit.

Program Organization

Of the five Parallel Class programs we observed, all but one engaged the Resource Specialist in a regularly scheduled teaching activity. In addition, most programs used DIS teachers to conduct similar courses for credit. Because adaptations were not made in the regular curriculum, RSP courses replaced the standard courses required of RSP students. Depending on the curriculum needs at each site, classes ranged from reading and mathematics to career education and peer tutoring. For example, at one site the RSP offered the full array of required social science classes. These classes usually employed a slower-paced multimedia approach. However, many courses were specifically developed for special education students, and similar courses were not available for other students. Most frequently, Resource Specialists, acutely aware of their students' need for vocational training, developed career education courses if such courses were not part of the regular curriculum. One program offered a study skills class for students who needed help with regular classroom assignments. A few RSPs offered preparatory courses for the required program, such as prefreshman English and pretechnical arts classes.

Because Parallel Classes offer an expanded range of services, the Resource Specialists relied extensively on their aides and DIS teachers. Several programs assigned aides to conduct classes up to four days per week. A few RSs gave aides extensive responsibility for coordinating the program and testing students. In two districts, special education administrators were informally negotiating with labor representatives who thought the aide's work was too similar to that of the Resource Specialist. In addition, most programs assigned DIS teachers to these Parallel Classes. The DIS teachers were responsible for all aspects of the class: teaching, grading, and discipline.

One Resource Specialist ingeniously extended her program's services by training regular classroom students to tutor RSP students in the regular classroom. From regular classroom teachers, she solicited names of students they would like to have assist them in the class. The Resource Specialist

then asked those students to apply for her training program. Interested students received information on tutoring and learning disabilities before being placed in a class.

Goals

Generally, the Parallel Classes were available as an alternative to the regular school program's requirements, although some classes were designed for students who needed relatively minor remediation before proceeding with the regular school program. At each site, RSs and other special education staff members identified at least one subject-area department that was particularly unwilling to adapt its classes to the RSP student needs. The Parallel Classes provided RSP students with credit in these subject areas.

Student Scheduling

Of the students interviewed in the Parallel Classes, 33% attended special education classes for two or more periods per day. Some of the students enrolled in peer counseling or career education courses, while others enrolled in two or more periods of academic classes for graduation credit. Sixty-seven percent of the students were in a Parallel Class for one period per day.

Vocational Education

All Parallel Class programs offered Vocational Education classes for special education students only. Although a few programs were able to build on the regular Vocational Education course assignments, all RSs worked with RSP students on basic projects: conducting interest inventories, teaching appropriate behavior, and securing work experience positions for students. Most RSs wished to increase the time they spent contacting businesses and public agencies because they recognized this activity was crucial to their

program's success. Resource Specialists in the Parallel Class program appeared better suited for this role. Becuase they were usually not responsible for conducting classes, they were able to develop successful relationships with outside agencies, such as the Department of Rehabilitation, the Industrial Education Council, community colleges, and charitable organizations.

Program Profile: Tutoring Center

The Tutoring Center is very similar to the common elementary Resource Specialist Program. With either a pullout program in a special classroom or a Resource Specialist visiting the regular classroom, students receive assistance with their regular academic assignments.

Program Organization

We observed four Tutoring Center programs. Three were drop-in centers, where students were sent by their teachers or could attend on their own when they desired. The other program, in a junior high school, offered tutoring in the regular classroom because teachers thought students missed too much when away from class. The Resource Specialist and aide attended student classes on a regular basis and helped students there.

Some Tutoring Centers offer regularly scheduled tutoring periods on the premise that students need regular contact with the RSP. Others provide service only upon student request, thereby giving students rapid intervention only when it is needed.

Two programs served only special education students and offered few services other than tutoring. The other programs served any student--from the special education or regular classroom program--who requested help, and these programs appeared less isolated from the rest of the school. Students who were on the RSP caseload were eligible for other services as well.

Goals

The primary goal of the Tutoring Center is to support the regular academic program. Consequently, remediation is not emphasized. Resource Specialists in this program indicate they may modify classroom assignments or provide additional materials, but nevertheless stress regular classroom assignments.

Student Scheduling

Student attendance in the Tutoring Center varied more than any other program. Of the students interviewed, 16% visited the Tutoring Center less than once a day, and 21% attended more than one period per day. The percentage of students who visited less than once a day is low; we had trouble locating the program's infrequent visitors if they were selected for an interview. Resource Specialists also mentioned they have trouble monitoring student progress because of unpredictable attendance.

Vocational Education

Students in this program did not receive vocational training through the special education department, and few had vocational objectives in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Behavior Problems

One issue--unacceptable student behavior--deserves special mention because Resource Specialists in the Tutoring Center consistently volunteered information on this problem. Most of the Resource Specialists operating the Tutoring Center program thought they were simply receiving too many students with behavior problems. In spite of this problem, one program worked on the premise that students who misbehaved in the regular classroom needed an

immediate "timeout period" in the drop-in RSP classroom. Students would receive counseling and, if appropriate, tutoring on the assignment that they missed because they were not in their regular class. This service was soon exploited by teachers and students, who found the program provided them with an accepted way to evade classroom problems.

Resources

Resources available to students in the Resource Specialist Program vary greatly from site to site. Resource Specialists provided estimates of weekly totals of special education staff hours devoted to students on the RSP caseload. Staff members included in the count were Resource Specialists, instructional and clerical aides, counselors, psychologists, remedial physical education teachers, vocational trainers, health professionals, social workers, and DIS or ISGI teachers. The total number of staff hours working with each site's RSP was divided by the number of RSP students to yield an estimate of staff hours per week per student.

A strong relationship exists between the percentage of students served by the RSP at each school and the Resource Specialist-to-student ratio. Schools with a high percentage of students in the RSP--usually a Parallel Class program--also exhibited high Resource Specialist-to-student ratios. However, these programs successfully compensated and increased RSP staff hours per student by employing aides and DIS teachers. In this way, staff hours per student were similar to those in other programs.

Each Resource Specialist received a budget for instructional and IEP expenses such as photocopying, assessment tests, and books. Expenditures per student ranged from $7.15 to $36.77. Table 3 displays the site-by-site findings.

Table 3

RESOURCE ALLOCATION FOR THE RESOURCE SPECIALIST PROGRAM

Site	RSP Hours per Student per Week	Percentage Served in RSP	Instrucional and IEP Expenditures per Student per Year	RS: Student Ratio
Learning Skills Class				
1	3.40	5.2	$13.34	1:30
2	4.64	3.4	31.49	1:22
3	4.11	5.6	25.27	1:47
Average	4.05	4.7	$23.37	1:33
Parallel Class				
4	1.98	42.0	7.15	1:63
5	2.64	10.5	12.00	1:50
6	3.49	12.6	36.77	1:68
7	2.60	9.4	24.57	1:57
8	3.33	5.8	28.58	1:28
Average	2.81	9.6	$21.81	1:53
Tutoring Center				
9	2.35	5.9	10.00	1:31
10	3.26	4.3	25.00	1:26
11	2.59	1.9	25.00	1:28
12	3.88	3.1	8.34	1:24
Average	3.02	3.8	$17.09	1:27
Total Average	3.19		$20.63	

Note: Site 4, with extraordinarily low hours per student and expenditures per student at 1.98 and $7.15 respectively, was a continuation high school with a low student-to-teacher ratio and nearly half of the population receiving RSP services. It is deleted from the calculation of average percentage of students served in the RSP.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS

Objective measurement of basic academic growth associated with program services is fundamental to any evaluation. State law requires that Resource Specialists monitor pupil progress on a regular basis and stipulates that districts maintain procedures that review pupil progress "on at least an annual basis" (Education Code Part 30, Chapter 4, Article 5, Section 56380). To evaluate student progress, we reviewed student records maintained by the Resource Specialist. No other special education records were maintained.

Student Progress

To develop measures of student progress, we collected recent achievement or assessment test scores from the IEPs or assessment records of the students we sampled for an interview. We intended to develop measures of yearly or monthly grade equivalent academic progress and planned to accept scores from the variety of tests students receive. However, consistent measures of academic or emotional growth were not available from site to site or even within most programs. Of the 145 student records we examined, only 61 or 42% contained evidence that the same test was administered to a student in one subject area in a twelve-month period. Thus, it is not possible to furnish reliable objective longitudinal data on student academic performance. Refer to Table 4, which summarizes the review of student records.

Table 4

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT RECORDS CONTAINING RESULTS SUITABLE FOR LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS

Site	Records Reviewed	Records with two consecutive years of test results	Percentage of Records with two consecutive years of test results
1	4	2	50.0%
2	0	-	-
3	13	3	23.1
4	15	10	66.7
5	32	16	50.0
6	16	7	43.8
8	17	1	5.9
9	9	3	33.3
10	4	0	0.0
11	7	1	14.3
12	6	4	66.7
13	22	14	63.6
Total	145	61	42%

Resource Specialists more commonly relied on subjective rather than objective measures. They consistently cited their perception of student attitude, behavior, and attendance as the best indicators of a successful program. These goals are not necessarily inappropriate measures, but currently few RSs collect quantitative information on student progress in these areas.

When we asked students how their school attendance changed as a result of the RSP, 47% of the students queried said their attendance improved, 44% said it was the same, and 9% thought it was worse. Responses were similar to questions about attitude change, as reported in more detail in the section on student perception.

Student Performance

Whenever possible, the current assessment scores were collected for the students we interviewed. Thus, estimates of the general performance level of the students served by the RSP were made. Although some of the tests cited are diagnostic tests, they were also used at the school site as a measure of grade-equivalent performance. On a site-by-site basis, student scores were averaged in each of the test areas. At a few sites, averages could not be calculated because sufficient numbers of students had not received the same test.

Most programs served students whose average scores in reading comprehension, spelling, and mathematics ranged from high fourth to high sixth grade levels. One program served students who performed, on the average, at the mid-third to mid-fourth grade level. Two other programs reported students with average reading comprehension scores in the eighth or ninth grade levels. Table 5 displays the test score averages.

Table 5

TEST SCORE AVERAGES BY SITE

Site	Test Name	Grade Equivalent Score
1	No Compatible Scores	
2	Woodcock Reading Comprehension	9.2
	Wide Range Achievement Test: Math	5.3
	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills: Reading	7.6
3	Stanford Reading Achievement Test	8.1
	Morrison McCall	5.7
	Wide Range Achievement Test: Math II	6.2
4	Wide Range Achievement Test: Spelling	5.2
	Wide Range Achievement Test: Math	5.8
5	Wide Range Achievement Test: Reading	6.9
	Wide Range Achievement Test: Spelling	5.5
	Wide Range Achievement Test: Math	6.3
	Morrison McCall	5.4
	Key Math	6.3
6	No Compatible Scores	
7	Peabody Individual Achievement Test: Reading Comprehension	6.1
	Peabody Individual Achievement Test: Spelling	4.4
	Peabody Individual Achievement Test. Math	6.9
8	Gilmore Reading Test: Comprehension	4.6
	Gilmore Reading Test: Accuracy	5.0
	Kottmeyer Spelling Test	4.6
	Key Math	5.0

Table 5 (concluded)

Site	Test Name	Grade Equivalent Score
9	Wide Range Achievement Test: Reading	5.5
	Wide Range Achievement Test: Spelling	4.7
	Wide Range Achievement Test: Math	4.9
	Gilmore Reading Test: Comprehension	5.8
	Gillmore Reading Test: Accuracy	5.6
10	Gates McKillop	6.3
	Key Math	6.7
	Spache Test of Reading Comprehension	7.5
11	Peabody Individual Achievement Test: Math	3.8
	Peabody Individual Achievement Test: Reading Comprehension	3.4
	Peabody Individual Achievement Test: Spelling	4.4
	General Information	4.6
12	No Compatible Scores	

COORDINATION ISSUES

At the secondary level, several characteristics of the school and the Resource Specialist Program assume special importance for a successful RSP. Indeed, most of this section's topics--counselor participation, alternative placements, student scheduling, study halls, services for teachers, and classroom activities--necessarily discuss the relationship between the regular and special education programs. Resource Specialists expressed interest in increasing their time addressing these coordination issues, but nevertheless they emphasized the instruction component of the RSP. This section introduces successful practices as well as problems encountered in program coordination.

Counselor Participation

Two-thirds of the RSPs established a beneficial relationship with the counselor's office. Although counselors at each site developed a unique set of responsibilities, they usually emphasized referral and assessment activities. In addition, some counselors negotiated changes in student schedules and credit for courses.

Despite the assistance the counselors provided, they rarely provided direct service to the students, and at only one site did students regularly receive psychological assessments from the counselors. More commonly, counselors attended assessment meetings either to contribute information on the student or to obtain information on the student for teacher use. At a few sites, counselors were the first school staff member to receive referrals to the RSP. At these sites, RSs were trying to promote the concept of the schools' responsibility for the student. The counselors were responsible for interviewing students and for exploring different placements available

to them. If the student was a special education candidate, the counselors would document the student's history and past curriculum modifications and would make the first call to the student's parents.

A few RSs, particularly those operating the Parallel Classes, did not teach but rather emphasized their consulting role. Consequently, they often assumed the counselor's responsibilities, such as approving schedules and general advising. Four of the sites had hired former counselors for a RS or DIS teacher position. These Resource Specialists conducted peer counseling sessions at least one period per day or included counseling activities in the RSP classroom activities on a daily basis.

Alternative Placements

Several RSPs were part of an extensive set of special education services, while some were the only special education service at a school other than a self-contained class. Consequently, the RSPs served different student populations at different schools, and the grade level assessments reported in the preceding section also reflect these differences. At the one site where RSP students performed, on the average at the third and fourth grade levels, the only alternative placement was a self-contained special day class. The school did not have a study hall and did not receive funds for other categorical programs. In addition, the school did not offer slower-paced basic skills classes in different subject areas.

At the other end of the spectrum, some Resource Specialist Programs in other schools were part of a wide range of special and regular classroom offerings. In a few cases, the regular classroom teachers offered slower-paced classes within the subject-area departments. An RSP student might enroll in such a course, along with non-RSP students, and still receive additional help from the Resource Specialist. Students who needed a different approach might enroll in a subject-area class offered by the special education department.

Student Scheduling

As high schools minimize costs by reducing elective course offerings and class periods, RSP students tend to lose important options in their educational program. Many schools now individualize student programs by offering classes for a variety of skill levels and posteducational plans. RSP students often rely on elective courses to remediate academic skills and to develop nonacademic skills. But as schools reduce the number of class periods, students still will be required to complete graduation requirements but will have little opportunity for nonacademic learning experiences.

Of the three program types, the Learning Skills Class is most severely affected by the reduction in the number of class periods offered. If schools cut back to five or six class periods, students would be able to enroll in few elective courses other than the Learning Skills Center. At one school, 48 semester courses were required for graduation, and 30 courses were required of all students. If the RSP student enrolled in the Learning Skills Class every semester, an additional eight semester units would be used, leaving 10 elective courses for the student in the junior and senior year.

In developing each student's IEP, most Resource Specialists were able to coordinate services for students by recommending specific classes and teachers. Resource Specialists reported their students had problems actually getting scheduled into classes, but that these problems were not unique to the RSP student. Nevertheless, seven of the RSs personally scheduled their students' programs before the rest of the school to ensure their placement in appropriate classes with receptive teachers. Another Resource Specialist was seeking permission to do such scheduling. The Resource Specialists who insisted that their students should not receive preferential treatment were in the Parallel Class program. Perhaps the availability of classes adapted for the RSP student reduces the need for preferential scheduling.

Study Hall

Few schools maintained a study hall for students. Resource Specialists staffed two of the three study halls in the sites we visited; an aide who did not tutor staffed the other. The study hall was open to all students.

Resource Specialists in all three programs stated that functioning in the regular classroom was a major goal, and most of the RSPs provided students with time and assistance with homework. Many students said they always finished their RSP classwork and, for the major part of the class period, completed homework assignments.

Services for Regular Classroom Teachers

Most Resource Specialists provided in-service training for regular classroom teachers on a limited basis and preferred to focus on consulting and classroom support services for teachers who frequently instructed RSP students. However, the style of consulting and classroom support appeared to be as unique as each Resource Specialist.

When the regular classroom teacher and the Resource Specialist cooperated, the results were often outstanding. One Resource Specialist developed a six-day instruction unit on the disabled for a required social science course. Several Resource Specialists tape-recorded books and tests for receptive teachers. At two sites, a portion of the RSP budget purchased supplementary materials such as books and computers for basic skills classes. A few Resource Specialists either developed the IEP with teachers or provided and updated a notebook of IEPs for teachers with RSP students.

All of the Resource Specialists who operated the Tutoring Center as well as a few other RSs mentioned that they relieved the regular classroom teacher of the pressure of teaching RSP students. Many RSs questioned this practice and thought students were sometimes "dumped" into the RSP.

To a limited extent, Resource Specialist aides were also assigned to assist in regular classes with many RSP students. Some Resource Specialists stipulated that aides should work only with RSP students. However, other Resource Specialists thought exclusive attention from special education staff in the regular class was a stigma and told aides to work with students with similar learning needs. At one school, the RSP aide was an assistant to the school secretary.

Classroom Activities

In each of the three groups, over 60% of the students queried said they spent their classroom time in individual study, and many students mentioned they frequently worked on assignments from other classes. However, nearly 37% of the Learning Skills Class students reported spending time in a combination of group and individual activities. Approximately 20% of the students in Parallel Classes spent their time in full classroom setting and another 20% spent their time in group or individual activities. Table 6 displays the findings.

Table 6

STUDENT RESPONSE TO
"HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR TIME IN THIS CLASSROOM?"
(Percentage)

	Full Class	Individual Study	Combination: Group and Individual Activities	Total
Learning Skills Class		63.2	36.8	100.0
Parallel Class	19.6	60.7	19.6	99.9*
Tutoring Center	8.3	66.7	25.0	100.0

*Does not equal 100.0 due to rounding

Almost all the Learning Skills Class students attended a special education class only one class period per day. In contrast, one-third of the Parallel Class students and 21% of the Tutoring Center students attended a special education class two or more class periods per day. Learning Skills Classes were usually in schools that had appropriate academic offerings in the subject area departments for the RSP student. Overall, the Parallel Class and Tutoring Center students did not have as many alternative placements available as did the Learning Skills Class students.

STAFF SATISFACTION

Although most of the Resource Specialist interview was designed to collect extensive descriptions of the RSP, we also asked Resource Specialists a series of close-ended questions to elicit summary thoughts about the program. Questions on their satisfaction with various aspects of the program and about changes in student skills and attitudes were asked before the end of the site visit.

When asked to generalize about the Resource Specialist Program, over 70% of the Resource Specialists queried expressed satisfaction. However, responses varied across the three program types offered. Eighty percent of the Resource Specialists operating the Tutoring Center were dissatisfied with the program compared with 17% in the Parallel Class and none in the Learning Skills Class. No other question produced such a skewed response across the three groups. Table 7 displays the findings.

Table 7

RESOURCE SPECIALISTS' GENERAL SATISFACTION
WITH THE RSP
(Percentage)

	"Somewhat" or "Very" Satisfied	"Somewhat" or "Very" Dissatisfied
Learning Skills Class	100%	0%
Parallel Class	83	17
Tutoring Center	20	80

Resource Specialists were generally satisfied with student attitudes toward the Resource Specialist Program. Twenty-eight percent said they were very satisfied with student attitudes toward their class, 55% were somewhat satisfied, and 17% were somewhat dissatisfied.

Resource Specialists appeared to be satisfied with the academic, vocational, and social goals of their programs. However, over one-quarter were dissatisfied with vocational goals. Table 8 displays the findings.

Table 8

RESOURCE SPECIALISTS' SATISFACTION WITH PROGRAM GOALS
(Percentage)

	"Somewhat" or "Very" Satisfied	"Somewhat" or "Very" Dissatisfied
Academic Goals	82%	18%
Social Goals	82	18
Vocational Goals	73	27

Similarly, a majority of Resource Specialists reported general improvement in student skills as a result of participation in the program. As with program goals, however, fewer Resource Specialists reported progress in vocational preparation; nearly one-half said the program did not affect student vocational skills. Table 9 displays the results.

Table 9

RESOURCE SPECIALISTS' PERCEPTION OF RSP EFFECT ON STUDENTS' SKILLS

	Generally Improved	No Change	Generally Regressed
Academic skills	87%	13%	0
Social skills	82	18	0
Vocational skills	53	47	0

Additionally, 88% of the Resource Specialists were "somewhat" to "very" satisfied with student academic progress.

The responses of the Resource Specialists interviewed in this study were similar to those reported by SRI in its Second Annual Report of the Independent Evaluation of the California Master Plan. Over 80% of the Resource Specialists sampled by SRI in 17 Master Plan Agencies thought

student educational and social skills improved as a result of integration in the regular classes through the RSP. Note that the response categories are slightly different: "greatly" or "somewhat improved" and "did not improve" or "regressed." Table 10 displays the responses of over 350 secondary Resource Specialists.

Table 10

RESOURCE SPECIALISTS' PERCEPTION OF STUDENT SKILL CHANGE:
1979 MASTER PLAN EVALUATION
(Percentage)

	Greatly or Somewhat Improved	Did Not Improve or Regressed
Educational skills	88%	12%
Social skills	93%	7%

When asked to describe the program's effect on student attitudes toward school, special education, other students, and themselves, Resource Specialists showed overwhelming support for the program. Over 80% of the RSs thought student attitudes became more positive, with the exception of student attitudes toward other students. None of the Resource Specialists thought student attitudes were more negative. Table 11 shows the results.

Table 11

RESOURCE SPECIALISTS' PERCEPTION OF
STUDENT ATTITUDE CHANGE
(Percentage)

	Became More Positive	No Change	Became More Negative
General attitude toward school	94%	6%	0
Attitude toward special education	83	17	0
Attitude toward other students	62	38	0
Attitude toward themselves	93	7	0

Again, Resource Specialists' responses were similar to those in the SRI Master Plan Evaluation. Over 75% of the Resource Specialists sampled by SRI

thought the majority of student attitudes improved as a consequence of integration. Like the Resource Specialists in this study, fewer thought student attitudes improved toward other students. Table 12 displays the results of the 1979 survey.

Table 12

RESOURCE SPECIALISTS' PERCEPTION OF STUDENT ATTITUDE CHANGE:
1979 MASTER PLAN EVALUATION
(Percentage)

	Became More Positive	No Change	Became More Negative
Attitude toward school	76.6%	21.1%	2.3%
Attitude toward special education	76.1	19.3	4.5
Attitude toward other students	66.7	32.2	1.1
Attitude toward themselves	84.1	14.2	1.7

As displayed in Table 13, nearly one-third of the Resource Specialists queried were dissatisfied with entrance criteria, and nearly as many--29%---were dissatisfied with referral procedures. Sixty percent of the Resource Specialists dissatisfied with the entrance criteria were in the Tutoring Center program.

Table 13

RESOURCE SPECIALIST SATISFACTION
WITH REFERRAL AND CRITERIA

	"Somewhat" or "Very" Satisfied	"Somewhat" or "Very" Dissatisfied
Referral procedures	71%	29%
Entrance criteria	69	31

Resource Specialists were generally pleased with the regular classroom teacher willingness to learn about and to adapt to the educational needs of Resource Specialist Program students. Over half--57%--said teachers were somewhat cooperative, and 43% said they were very cooperative. However, 22% of those queried said they "couldn't answer" or they found teachers within the school were "very cooperative" to "not cooperative."

STUDENT PERCEPTION OF THEIR PERFORMANCE AND OF THE RESOURCE SPECIALIST PROGRAM

To capture student perception of the Resource Specialist Program and their performance in academic, vocational, and social skill areas, highly structured interviews were developed. In addition, at the close of the interview, students were encouraged to talk freely about their experiences in the program. Their comments certainly confirm the Resource Specialists' reports of improved student attitude and confidence. Most of the students remarks appeared to characterize their individual relationship with the teacher:

- She keeps after me
- He sees that I do my homework and get to class
- She's really good.

Perception of the RSP

When students were asked to compare the Resource Specialist Program with other classes in which they were enrolled, Learning Skills Class students tended to respond more favorably to their RSP class than did the students in the other two program types. In fact, nearly one-quarter of the Tutoring Center students said they either "disliked" or "really disliked" their class. Table 14 shows student responses.

Although students in the Tutoring Center were more likely to say that they preferred a pullout program, less than 20% of all students queried indicated preference for the pullout program. Most students preferred either assistance in the regular classroom or a separate class with other students with similar problems.

Table 14

STUDENT ATTITUDE TOWARD THEIR
SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASS
(Percentage)

	Really Like	Like	Dislike	Really Dislike
Learning Skills Class	17.9%	69.2%	12.8%	0.0%
Parallel Class	10.5	71.9	10.5	7.0
Tutoring Center	16.7	61.1	16.7	5.6

Perception of Skill Change

Students were asked if they thought their academic, vocational, and social skills improved as a result of participating in the RSP. Over one-half of the students queried thought they had improved in four curriculum areas. With the exception of vocational skills, there was no variation among responses from students in the Learning Skills Class, the Parallel Class, and the Tutoring Center.

Overall, 60% of the students interviewed said they thought their performance improved in at least one academic area: reading, essay writing, or mathematics. Table 15 displays the results.

Table 15

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO THOUGHT
THEIR PERFORMANCE WAS BETTER,
THE SAME, OR WORSE IN AT LEAST ONE
OF THREE ACADEMIC AREAS

Better	Same	Worse	Total
59.9%	38.6%	1.5%	100.0

Student responses to questions about job plans and skills differed when examined by program type. Nearly 50% of the Learning Class students and 44%

of the Parallel Class students reported improvement, whereas only 27% of the Tutoring Center students said their job plans or skills were better. Tutoring Center students did not receive vocational training as a part of the RSP, and less than 10% received vocational training in the regular school program. Table 16 displays the findings.

Table 16

PERCENTAGES OF STUDENTS WHO THOUGHT THEIR JOB SKILLS OR JOB PLANS WERE BETTER, THE SAME, OR WORSE

	Better	Same	Worse	Total
Learning Skills Class	49%	51%	0%	100.0
Parallel Class	44	52	4	100.0
Tutoring Center	27	68	5	100.0

Perception of Attitude Change

Slightly less than half of the students interviewed said they felt better about their classes and their Resource Specialist Program class, and 7% said they felt worse. But the plurality--48%--said they felt about the same. Student feelings about themselves and other students were similar to those about their classes. Fifty-one percent said they felt better, 47% said they felt the same, and 2% said they felt worse.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Program Description

Three major types of program organization were identified:

- Learning Skills Class--For elective credit remediation.
- Parallel Class--For graduation credit, slower-paced, mixed-media instruction.
- Tutoring Center--For drop-in or pull-out assistance with regular classroom assignments.
- Learning Skills Classes emphasized remediation and developed problem-solving skills.
- Parallel Classes were offered as an alternative to the regular school program's graduation requirements or were developed to address specific deficits in the regular curriculum.
- Tutoring Centers emphasized supporting the regular academic program.
- Entrance to the RSP is determined at most sites by academic achievement scores. Usually, students were eligible for services if they were two or more years below grade level in one or more skill area.
- The resources invested in the RSP--in terms of staff time and budget--varied from site to site.

Student Performance and Progress

Significant lapses in the use of student performance and progress measures were identified:

- Consistent measures of academic growth are not collected by most programs. Less than half of the records sampled used the same test for two consecutive years.

- Most RSPs served students whose average grade equivalent scores in academic subjects ranged from high fourth to high sixth grade.

- However, the program's population appears to vary greatly across schools. From site to site, student reading scores averaged from low ninth to low third grade.

Coordination Issues

Successful practices, as well as some questionable ones, were documented:

- Two-thirds of the RSPs established a beneficial relationship with the counselor's office. However, a few RSs, particularly those operating Parallel Classes, assumed the counselor's responsibility.

- The availability of alternative placements determined, to a certain extent, the type of population the RSP served.

- Reductions in the regular school program--particularly in electives and the number of class periods--severely limit RSP students' program options.

- Few schools maintained study halls for students, although students frequently use RSP classtime to complete homework assignments.

- Over 60% of the students said they spent their classroom time in individual study. However, nearly 37% of the Learning Skills Class students reported spending time in a combination of group and individual activities.

- One-third of the Parallel Class students and 21% of the Tutoring Center students interviewed attended a special education class two or more class periods per day. In contrast, 3% of the students queried attended the Learning Skills Class two or more class periods per day.

Staff Satisfaction

Most Resource Specialists--with the exception of those RSs in the Tutoring Center--were satisfied with major aspects of the RSP:

- Seventy percent of the Resource Specialists queried expressed satisfaction with the RSP, although 80% of the Resource Specialists in the Tutoring Center were dissatisfied.

- Over 80% of the Resource Specialists were somewhat or very satisfied with students' attitudes toward the RSP and reported general improvement in their academic and social skills.

- Barely one-half--53%--of the Resource Specialists said student vocational skills improved as a result of participation in the RSP.

- Over 80% of the Resource Specialists reported they thought student attitudes toward school, special education, and themselves became more positive. Fewer Resource Specialists--62%--thought student attitudes toward other students improved.

- Nearly one-third of the Resource Specialists queried were dissatisfied with entrance criteria for the program. Sixty percent of the RSs who were dissatisfied with the entrance criteria operated the Tutoring Center.

Student Perception of Their Performance and of the Resource Specialist Program

Student responses to the RSP were generally favorable:

- Over 80% of the RSP students interviewed either "like" or "really liked" their RSP class when compared with their other classes. However, nearly one-quarter of the students in the Tutoring Center either "disliked" or "really disliked" their RSP class.

- Less than 20% of all the students interviewed preferred a pullout program to either assistance in the regular classroom or a separate class with students of similar ability.

- Sixty percent of the students said they thought their performance improved in reading, essay writing, or mathematics.

- However, only 44% of the students thought their vocational skills or plans improved as a consequence of being in the RSP.

- Over 44% of the students thought their attitudes improved toward their classes, themselves, and other students.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Four major issues emerged in our site visits and data analysis: program emphasis, responsibility, eligibility, and monitoring. This section discusses these issues and makes recommendations intended to improve the Resource Specialist Program.

Program Emphasis

Given the comparatively low level of academic performance of the RSP student population, it is questionable whether the RSP should continue to place such strong emphasis on academic skill development in the secondary grades. Surely many of the coping strategies and remedial classes either have proved useful or have been abandoned by the time the student reaches the secondary level. Student social skills and vocational plans emerge as a primary need at the secondary level.

The Resource Specialist Program requirements--which stress functioning in the regular class--effectively preempt intensive development of a comprehensive vocational program. Federal law stresses the concept of integrating, to fullest extent possible, the special education student in the regular program. Accordingly, students must attempt to succeed on the regular program's terms. However, learning disabled students, for a variety of reasons, simply may not be best served by the regular program.

What seems lacking is an acknowledgment that the standard school program has proved only minimally effective for these students. These learning disabled students have not been historically excluded from the classroom, as

have students with more extreme handicaps. The type of learning disabled student served by the RSP has usually been allowed to barely pass or to fail in the regular classroom setting.

Perhaps at the secondary level the Resource Specialist Program should provide minimum academic support and should concentrate more on providing vocational and counseling services. However, most of the Resource Specialists interviewed mentioned that they had not been trained in vocational education. Yet, many were doing an admirable job of developing a vocational component for their program. The RSP probably could be more effective in secondary schools if its sole purpose were to provide students with the social and vocational skills they will need for the adult world. While this approach could possibly displace some students now served by the RSP, a vocational and social emphasis could reach some of the currently disenfranchised students who are leaving school without adequate academic or vocational training.

Program Responsibility

Although the Resource Specialist Program legitimately provides segregated special education services, it also provides services that undoubtedly are the responsibility of the regular education program.

To the extent that the RSP resources are used to enable students to benefit from the regular education program or to develop supplementary vocational and counseling programs, the RSP services appear appropriate. But we question whether some services are best provided by the RSP or by the regular education program. In particular, the use of Resource Specialists to maintain a study hall or to provide extensive homework assistance appears to be a costly service that does not need such highly trained professional staff. Furthermore, maintaining a study hall should be the school's responsibility, and a study hall could reduce the costly RSP service.

Students who need a regularly scheduled study period to augment their regular program should be placed in a study hall and should not be declared exceptional in order to attend.

Program Eligibility

Most Resource Specialist Programs operate with an unclear definition of the learning disabled student. Consequently, academic failure or a history of receiving services appear to be the major criteria for receiving services. More precisely, though, the real criterion seems to be whether or not the student can benefit from the Resource Specialist Program at an individual school. This criterion--being able to benefit from an existing program--runs counter to the 94-142 principle of appropriate placement: the student needs should determine the program rather than the reverse, with the program selecting the student.

The broad guidelines for the Resource Specialist Program permit widely varied types of programs in the secondary schools. These programs employ creative approaches to the numerous problems of service delivery in the secondary schools, and they appeared to accommodate the unique needs of the individual schools. But the latitude the RSP enjoys is so extensive that it allows the school site staff to determine the type of student the program will serve as well as the character of the program's services.

As a statewide program the RSP does not have an operational definition of its target population. Eligibility for the program varies across districts, and program services vary accordingly. The state assumes a considerable fiscal burden in permitting students with varied and often undefined performance problems to be labeled as exceptional stuents. Definitive leadership is required to determine eligibility criteria for the learning disabled population.

Program Monitoring

The paucity of data on student performance and progress undermines claims of professionalism in the RSP and impedes efforts to compare the RSP with other programs such as Vocational or Compensatory education. With few exceptions, Resource Specialists are not able to provide quantitative information on the success of their program or a particular teaching approach. Resource Specialists are required to collect student progress information, but apparently this requirement is not adequately monitored. Perhaps the state could develop a self-evaluation instrument for the Resource Specialist Program. This instrument could outine simple evaluation techniques that districts and Resource Specialists could use to monitor student progress.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

Advance Questionnaire

You will need your class roster to complete the first portion of this questionnaire.

Please count down _____ students on the Resource Specialist Program class roster for the first class you teach. Please write down in the space provided on the next page, that student's name and period number. Then count every fifth student after that and write down the student's name and period number. Continue recording the name and period number of every fifth student. Do not count down for every class period. For example: If you are to count down three students, your roster and questionnaire would look like this:

Period 1	Period 2	Questionnaire	
		Name	Period
Bob	Jerry	Sue	1
Jim	Keri	Lani	1
*Sue	Teri	Harry	2
Ted	Mary		
Al	*Harry		
Buz			
Frank			
*Lani			

1. _____ _____

2. _____ _____

3. _____ _____

4. _____ _____

STUDENT NAME	Period
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____

- What is the total school enrollment? _____
- What is the total special education enrollment? _____
- How many students are served by your Resource Specialist Program caseload at this school? _____
- Please indicate how many students of each disability type and sex are served by this school's Resource Specialist Program on your caseload. Count each student only once.

	Total	Males	Females
Learning Handicapped			
Learning disabilities	___	___	___
Behavior disorders	___	___	___
Educationally retarded (EMR)	___	___	___

Communicatively Handicapped

Deaf	___	___	___
Deaf-Blind	___	___	___
Severely hard of hearing	___	___	___
Severely language handicapped	___	___	___
Language and speech handicapped	___	___	___

Physically Handicapped

Blind	___	___	___
Partially seeing	___	___	___
Orthopedically handicapped	___	___	___
Other health impaired	___	___	___

Severely Handicapped

Developmentally handicapped	___	___	___
Trainable mentally retarded	___	___	___
Autistic	___	___	___
Seriously emotionally disturbed	___	___	___

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS _____

. Please indicate how many students spend their time in the RSP for the amount of time listed:

- On a drop-in basis _____

- As a regularly scheduled one-period class _____

- For more than one period _____

. For the students on your caseload at this school, please indicate which school, district, or county staff provide services to these students. What is the level of effort expressed in hours per week?

Do nonschool personnel such as volunteer aides or outside agencies provide service to your students? ___Yes ___No

If so, what is their level of effort?

Category of Personnel

	School Staff Serving RSP Students	Nonschool Staff Serving RSP Students
	Hours/week	Hours/week
Resource Specialist	_____	_____
Designated Instructional Services	_____	_____
. Speech Therapy		
. _____		
. _____		
Itinerant Special Teacher	_____	_____
Instructional Aides	_____	_____
Clerical or Secretarial Aides	_____	_____
Special Class Teacher	_____	_____
Special Day School Teacher	_____	_____
Home Teacher	_____	_____

Category of Personnel	School Staff Serving RSP Students	Nonschool Staff Serving RSP Students
	Hours/week	Hours/week
Hospital Teacher		
Audiologists		
Counselors		
Vision-mobility Trainer		
Educational Media Specialist		
Health Services Personnel		
Occupation Therapist		
Physical Therapist		
Psychologists		
Remedial Physical Education		
Social Workers		
Speech Pathologist		
Special Vocational Personnel		

Other_____ _____ _____

_____

TOTAL _____ _____

_____

- Are job descriptions available for these positions.? __Yes ___No

  (These questions are offered to give some time to think about them)

- Do you think there are rules or program requirements that are not appropriate at the secondary level? ___What are they?

- How have you adapted the program to the secondary level?

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

- How do students usually spend their time in the RSP?

  -in groups

  -in a full classroom setting

  -in individual study

- How is the classroom environment organized?

  -for different group sizes

  -for different subject study

- What are your aide's responsibilities?

- How do aides interact with students?

  -in the regular classroom

  -in the RSP

- What materials are available for student use?

- How do the material and instructional strategies promote program goals?

- How are students referred to the program?

- Are students who fail the competency test in 8th grade referred to special education?

- What entrance criteria do you use?

- How are students assessed?

- How are the special education programs coordinated with the regular eduation programs?

- Is the IEP used to coordinate or to implement the students' programs?

  -How does that work? (Who is involved?)

  -How well does the process work?

  Very Well____ All Right____ Not Well____

- What are the exit criteria? How does a student leave the program?

STUDENT AND STAFF SATISFACTION AND STUDENT PROGRESS

1 Please indicate what effect, if any, participation in the RSP has had on students' skills in the following areas:

	Generally Improved	No Change	Generally Regressed
Academic Skills	1	2	3
Social Skills	1	2	3
Vocational Skills	1	2	3

2 I'm interested in your general feelings about how the program is running. Would you say you are:

Very satisfied ____

Somewhat satisfied ____

Somewhat dissatisfied ____

Very dissatisfied ____

3 What about these things, how satisfied are you with:

	VS	SS	SD	VD
Student attitudes toward the class	1	2	3	4
Student academic progress	1	2	3	4

	VS	SS	SD	VD
Referal procedures	1	2	3	4
Entrance criteria	1	2	3	4
The program's academic goals for students	1	2	3	4
The program's vocational goals for students	1	2	3	4
The program's social goals for students	1	2	3	4

4 Please indicate what effect, if any, you think the RSP has had on students' attitudes in the following areas:

	Became More Positive	No Change	Became More Negative
General attitude toward school	1	2	3
Attitude toward special education	1	2	3
Attitude toward other students	1	2	3
Attitude toward themselves	1	2	3

5 In your opinion, have the regular classroom teachers and other staff members at your school been willing to learn about and adapt to your students educational needs?

_____Very Cooperative

_____Somewhat cooperative

_____Not cooperative

6 Aside from (any/the) problem (you may have/of) getting teachers to accept students into their classroom, do you have problems actually scheduling students into classes? ___No ___Yes

7 Do you think this problem is unique to RSP students?
___No ___Yes

8 Do RSP students get preferential treatment when scheduling classes?

PROGRAM GOALS

- As (one of) the RS at this school, what is your role?

  ____as a teacher/tutor
  ____as a program coordinator
  ____as an assessor or diagnostian
  ____as a counselor
  ____as a disciplinarian

- How do you interact with the principal? The counselors? Regular teachers?

- What are the program goals?

- How are the goals set?
  - Who participates? (administrators, teachers, students, & parents)

- What is the program's curricular emphasis?

- What do you think best measures student progress in this program?

- How is goal attainment measured?

- Do you have pre- and post-test information for this years' class?(or last year's class?)

  ___ITBS
  ___IOWA
  ___WRAT
  ___WISC

Do you want other information?

Later on, I would like to get copies of this information for a few of your students, (Look for year to year growth measures)

- Does the program have a budget for discretionary expenses? ___Y ___N
  (If yes) How much?_____
  Who decides how this money is spent?

- Does this school receive _____funds?
  (if yes) Does the RSP receive these funds?

	School	RSP
SIP	No Yes	No Yes
Title I	No Yes	No Yes
Voc. Ed	No Yes	No Yes
Any other categorical funds?	No..Yes	No Yes

- What alternative or complementary placements exist?

- Does this school offer a supervised study hall?

- Does this school permit students to schedule time off campus regularly for non-instructional purposes?

- Do school counselors have any special responsibilities for serving the RSP students?

Student Interview

I will be asking you questions about what you do in this class and your feelings about it.

. What classes are you taking?

____ Math
- Algebra
- Basic Math

____ P.E.

____ English
- Reading
- Regular Offering

____ Shop
- Auto
- Wood

____ Home Economics

____ Drama

____ Science
- Biology

____ Foreign Language

____ Social Science

- History
- Freshman Intro
- Government

____ Business

- Typing

____ Arts and Crafts

____ Music

____ _____

____ _____

- How do you spend your time in this classroom? What is the first thing you do when you walk in?

___in groups
___in a full classroom setting
___in individual study

- How many periods a day are you in this classroom?

___less than once a day (drop in)
___once a day (or as a one period class)
___more than one period a day

- Compared to your other classes, would you say you <u>really</u> like this class, like it, dislike it, or <u>really</u> dislike it.

  ____really like it
  ____like it
  ____dislike it
  ____really dislike it

- If you were having trouble in a class (not keeping up with the classwork), there are three things you might do. Would you:

  1___ prefer to have a teacher or an aide in that <u>class</u> help you or any other student who might need help.
  2___ prefer to go to another classroom and have a teacher or an aide there help you.
  3___ prefer to take a class with other students who are having a similar problem.

- I am going to read you a list of things that might have changed as a result of being in this class. Some things may not apply. Butif they do, please tell me if you think they are generally better, about the same, or generally worse.

	Generally Better	About the Same	Generally Worse
Reading	1	2	3
Math	1	2	3
Writing (like an essay)	1	2	3
Job plans or ideas	1	2	3
Job skills	1	2	3

	Generally Better	About the Same	Generally Worse
Feelings about your other classes	1	2	3
Feelings about this class	1	2	3
Feelings about other students	1	2	3
Feelings about yourself;	1	2	3

Now I have a few background questions and then we will be done.

. What grade are you in now? 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

. When did you start taking this class? (Probe: Were you ever in a class like this before then?)

____ This semester
____ As a Freshman

. Five years ago, were you in a program like this, or what?

____ All regular clasroom
____ All special classroom
____ Regular clasroom with some assistance
____ Special class with some regular education contact

. Anything else you can tell me about this class?

OBSERVATION

SEX ___M
___F

DID R HAVE TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING QUESTIONS?
___Yes, a lot (which ones)
___Yes, a little
___No

R's SPEECH
___Severe impairment
___Slight impairment
___No impairment

DID R HAVE TROUBLE HEARING QUESTIONS
___Yes, great problems
___Yes, some
___No

DESCRIBE ANY MARKED DISABILITIES THAT ARE NOT MENTIONED ELSEWHERE

WAS R GENERALLY COOPERATIVE OR ANTAGONISTIC TOWARD THE INTERVIEW?
___Friendly, eager, volunteered information
___Cooperative, but not enthusiastic
___Indifferent or bored
___Irritated or hostile--anxious to finish

In what race or ethnic group do you consider yourself?

____ White

____ Black

____ Hispanic

____ Chinese, Japanese, Korean

____ Other Asian (Vietnamese, East Indian)

____ Filipino, Hawain, Samoan, other Pacific Islanders

____ Other or combination.